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CIRM ANNOUNCES EXTENSIVE INTEREST IN DISEASE TEAM PLANNING AWARDS

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., December 28, 2007 – CIRM today announced that it has received and accepted 66 letters of intent for the Disease Team Planning Awards. Fifty six applications were received from non-profit organizations and 10 have been submitted by for-profit companies.

The Disease Team Planning Awards will support multi-disciplinary teams of scientists in pursuit of therapies for specific diseases by providing up to 20 planning grants of up to \$55,000. The ultimate goal is to fund the work of disease teams that would result in a therapy or diagnostic for a particular disease or serious injury.

A primary CIRM objective is to facilitate the exploration of a new method of integrating and organizing the highest quality basic, translational, and clinical research in a team setting. Taking an innovative disease team approach has the potential to advance therapies into the clinic more rapidly. The planning awards will provide relatively modest grants to scientists who will form teams to help prepare research and management plans for major grants for translational research that could lead to clinical trials.

Complete applications for the planning awards are due on January 31, 2008 with decisions on funding by the Independent Citizen's Oversight Committee (ICOC), the CIRM's governing board, taking place in June 2008.

About CIRM CIRM was established in 2004 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research opportunities. To date, the CIRM governing board has approved 156 research grants totaling almost \$260 million, making CIRM the largest source of funding for human embryonic stem cell research in the world. For more information, please visit www.cirm.ca.gov.